comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL LIBRARY SERVICE

Collection Development Policy Revised July 2026

Building collections that inspire reading, learning and discovery for everyone in County Meath.

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Mission Statement

Meath County Council Library Service (MCCLS) strives to be the key provider of life-long learning facilities delivering literary, social and cultural services for the community. The library service will deliver a well-resourced public library service that contributes to the social, economic and well-being of communities (Meath County Council Corporate Plan 2024-2029)

Purpose

This policy acts as a framework document to determine the selection, maintenance, retention and disposal of materials held in MCCLS collections. It provides staff members with professional guidelines while acquainting stakeholders with our methodology. The Collection Development Policy enables the library service to provide the best possible service to our borrowers in accordance with our mission to provide for their lifelong educational, recreational and informational needs.

Objectives of the Collection

MCCLS will endeavour to keep pace with our ever-changing communities. As far as is practical the collection will meet distinct demographic, linguistic and cultural requirements. The inclusion of materials in the library's collection does not constitute endorsement of the ideas, opinions, or viewpoints expressed within them.

The library service aims to:

1. To foster a love of reading and support lifelong learning
2. Support educational and literacy objectives across all age groups.
3. Facilitate cultural enrichment and personal growth.
4. Address the diverse recreational interests of the community.
5. Provide access to current and authoritative information.
6. Preserve unique local collections for the benefit of the community.

Library materials are selected based on their information, educational and recreational merits and are designed to meet the needs of a broad populace. Our remit requires an emphasis on materials that will be of value to the general public.

Scope of the Collection

MCCLS stock is spread across its fifteen branches and library Headquarters. The collections include the following:

1. **Books**: Print items in the genres fiction, non-fiction, reference works, and large-print editions.
2. **Media**: DVDs, audiobooks, CDs and games.
3. **Digital Content**: born digital content, E-books, e-audiobooks, databases, online learning tools, e-newspapers, e-magazines, and streaming services.
4. **Library of Things**: Non-traditional library items and objects available to borrow such as Radon Monitors, Codema Energy Kits.
5. **Other formats** such as serials, newspapers, manuscripts, maps, photographs, prints, ephemera.
6. **Age groups served** children, young adults, adults.
7. **Languages** Multilingual collections.
8. **Specialised collections**

   Local Studies material: items relating to the history, heritage, and geography of County Meath. The main local studies collection is housed in the County Library Navan with smaller collections in each library.

   Healthy Ireland collection: MCCLS works as an external partner to the HSE to offer a curated collection of titles that focuses on improving people's health and wellbeing. Its goal is to prevent chronic disease by encouraging healthy lifestyle behaviours and creating healthier environments.

   Skills for Life collection: This is a national programme that offers free resources to help adults build everyday skills.

   Irish Language collections: MCCLS is committed to the development and widespread usage of the Irish language through the provision of resources for the use of people of all ages and backgrounds.

Book Club titles: Copies of titles curated for book clubs are available. The aim is to facilitate fast lending of multiple copies of titles that have been deemed of interest to local book clubs.

Class sets: Collection of lendable book sets are available through the Schools Service. Designed for use by teachers, Meath Library Service provides sets of popular books from junior infants up to young adult.

Sensory Collection: Collection of lendable Toys Technology Training to offer support to children and adults with learning difficulties, disabilities or more significant needs. The collection was chosen by staff in partnership with therapists and other professionals working in the community. The collection is housed in the County Library Navan and available for borrowing across the branch network in Meath.

Purchasing Considerations & Selection Methods

MCCLS is legally obliged to purchase materials from those library suppliers that have won national tenders, as overseen by the Local Government Management Agency.

The allocation of resources for stock purchasing is decided by elected representatives at local level. The library service is committed to maximising value for money in the allocation of resources and to engaging in green procurement practices in the acquisition of library materials.

Stock selection is the remit of designated staff members involved in acquisitions who consult catalogues and reputable reviews. Staff also give consideration to award-winning books, suggestions for purchase from the public and staff, current trends, bestsellers lists.

Responsibility for Selection

Purchasing responsibility is assigned according to national tender areas and formats. Staff members have access to trade websites, bibliographic sources, professional periodicals and reputable publisher's websites.

Given the specialised nature of their stock, purchasing for Local Studies and Archives is handled primarily by their own staff members.

Selection Criteria

Criteria for selection of materials include the following:

1. Quality, authority, relevance, diversity, and demand.
2. Consideration of author expertise, reputation, or significance.
3. Consideration of the relevance of items to community needs.
4. Evaluation of the authority of content.
5. Consideration of the quality, production value format.
6. Consideration of cost, value for money and budgetary constraints.
7. Consideration of general availability.
8. Alignment with the library's strategic priorities.
9. Consideration of diversity of viewpoints, genres, and cultures.
10. Consideration of the selection of self-published items and other emerging publishing trends.
11. Consideration of the legal obligations of the library authority.

Artificial Intelligence

MCCLS will not deliberately purchase, acquire or accept donations of materials primarily generated by artificial intelligence.

Intellectual Freedom

1. MCCLS is committed to intellectual freedom and the principles of free and open access to information in multiple formats.
2. Patrons of MCCLS are free to select or reject any item for personal use.
3. Responsibility for a child's use of library materials, regardless of format or content, lies with the parent or guardian.
4. The Collection reflects a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives, even those that may be considered controversial or unpopular.
5. The decision of MCCLS to acquire material does not constitute endorsement of the material's content.

Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Section 42 (1) of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty requires public bodies to integrate human rights and equality issues into every aspect of how public bodies perform their functions on an ongoing basis.

MCCLS is committed to this statutory obligation to offer a range of materials that represent diverse cultures and viewpoints and acknowledges the obligation to provide equal access to all.

1. MCCLS operates as part of the Libraries Ireland consortium and is committed to sharing stock on a national level. The national delivery system is used to enhance, but not replace, local collection development.
2. MCCLS recognises the need to lend multiple formats to meet varying needs of borrowers. We purchase regular print, large print, graphic and audiobooks in physical format, as well as newspapers, periodicals, DVDs and computer games. Where available, we also purchase dyslexia-friendly books.
3. MCCLS offers digital versions of books, audiobooks, periodicals, and newspapers through extensive eservices platforms.
4. MCCLS will endeavour to adapt to the diverse needs of borrowers and library users who have special needs.
5. In a commitment to providing greater access to branches, MCCLS continues to expand access through My Open Library.
6. MCCLS holds materials in the Irish and English languages. However, to address the ethno-linguistic needs of its diverse population, the library service will endeavour to develop collections in languages other than English, which reflect local community needs.
7. For literacy and educational needs, there is a wide range of physical and digital items that support learning at a variety of reading and numeracy levels.

Collection Assessment and Maintenance

A modern, relevant and broad-ranging collection can only be maintained through continual professional appraisal.

Deselection of library materials is carried out to keep collections responsive to borrower needs.

Deselection is an ongoing process and is the responsibility of library staff acting in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Damaged items or items in poor physical condition
2. Outdated or ephemeral material
3. Past use and expected future use
4. Assessment of educational, recreational and informational relevance
5. Replacement by newer edition and/or availability of more up-to-date subject material
6. Availability elsewhere
7. Availability of shelf-space and/or storage
8. Duplication of copies
9. Relevance to the scope of a special collection
10. In alignment with sustainability goals, MCCLS is committed to environmentally responsible practices in maintaining its collection. Where possible, withdrawn materials may be reused, repurposed, or recycled to reduce waste.

Donations

While some donations are accepted, MCCLS reserves the right to determine if the materials fit current collection development policies.

1. MCCLS reserves the right to decline or accept an offer of donations due to its assessment of the increase in value and the perceived use of the items to the collection.
2. MCCLS reserves the right to decline to accept an offer of donations due to space or resource constraints.
3. Acceptance, classifications, shelving, access, location and disposal will be determined by MCCLS staff. If accepted, such items become the property of MCCLS.

Evaluating the Collection Performance

MCCLS continuously assesses the performance of its stock through quantitative and qualitative means.

The collection is evaluated regularly with reference to currency, quality, subject matter and breadth/depth of the collection and will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with Public Library Standards and Benchmarks, legislative requirements, community needs and strategic priorities.

1. The library service routinely assesses the statistical performance of the collection via the library management system's reporting functions.
2. Circulation and reservation figures are key performance indicators.
3. Qualitatively, consideration is given to feedback from branch staff and borrowers to ensure that the needs of local communities are being met.

Policy Availability

This Collection Development Policy is publicly available online on the Libraries section of Meath County Council's website.

Copyright

MCCLS conforms with all provisions of copyright legislation, as contained in S.I. No. 427/2000 -

Copyright and Related Rights (Librarians and Archivists) (Copying of Protected Material) Regulations, 2000.

APPENDIX A: STATUTORY & POLICY DOCUMENTS

Public Libraries Act, 1947:
http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1947/act/40/enacted/en/print LGMA:

S.I. No. 427/2000 - Copyright and Related Rights (Librarians and Archivists) (Copying of Protected Material)
Regulations, 2000: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/si/427/made/en/print

2017.pdf IFLA Guidelines: Guidelines for a Collection Development Policy using the Conspectus Model:
http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/acquisition-collection-development/publications/gcdp-en.pdf Gifts for the Collections: Guidelines for Libraries:
http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/hq/publications/professional-report/112.pdf